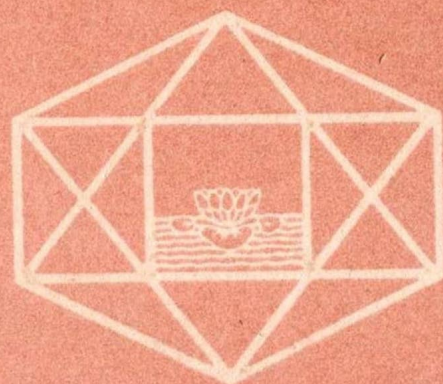


SEPTEMBER 1975



ALL INDIA MAGAZINE

SRI AUROBINDO SOCIETY
PONDICHERRY

HOW shall I know God's will with me? I have to put egoism out of me, hunting it from every lair and burrow and bathe my purified and naked soul in His infinite workings; then He himself will reveal it to me.

SRI AUROBINDO

(Vol. 17, p. 121)

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ALL INDIA MAGAZINE

Vol. V No. 2

September 1975

— Matter shall reveal the Spirit's face. —

<i>To Keep Progressing</i>	...	2
<i>Advice on Experiences</i>	...	4
<i>Difference between Yoga and Religion</i>	...	6
<i>When You Forget this</i>	...	11
<i>Life Has a Purpose</i>	...	12
<i>To Make Life Significant</i>	...	13
<i>Birthday Messages to a Sadhak</i>	...	14
<i>Interest for Physical Education</i>	...	15
<i>A Prayer</i>	...	20
<i>A Message</i>	...	21
<i>Flowers</i>	...	22
<i>The Day the Earth Turned Gold</i>	...	24
<i>Information Letter</i>	...	28

All the articles in this issue, except the last piece and the Information Letter, are extracts from the writings/talks of SRI AUROBINDO and THE MOTHER. Most of the Mother's words are translations from the original French. Titles to these extracts are given by the editor.

TO KEEP PROGRESSING

For those who want to keep progressing continually, there are three major ways to progress:

- 1) by enlarging the field of one's consciousness,*
- 2) by greater and always more complete understanding of what one knows,*
- 3) by finding the Divine and surrendering more and more to his Will.*

In other terms, this means:

- 1) constantly enriching the possibilities of the instrument,*
- 2) ceaselessly perfecting the functioning of this instrument,*
- 3) making the instrument increasingly receptive and docile vis-à-vis the Divine;*

or, in other words:

- 1) to learn to understand and do more things,*

2) *to purify oneself of all that prevents a total surrender to the Divine,*

3) *to make the consciousness more and more receptive to the Divine Influence.*

One might say:

Enlarge more and more,

go deeper and deeper,

surrender more and more completely.

February 15, 1972

THE MOTHER

(Bulletin, Feb. 1973, pp. 33-35)

Progress is the sign of the divine influence in creation.

The Mother

ADVICE ON EXPERIENCES

We have read in *The Synthesis of Yoga* and also translated recently passages from *The Life Divine* where Sri Aurobindo gives details, explanations and instructions to those who do the sadhana and try to have experiences, that are at times too strong for their state of consciousness, bringing about unfortunate consequences. I made a reflection on this subject and I am asked to explain to you my reflection. I said, "One must always be greater than one's experience". Here is what I wanted to say:

Whatever be the nature, power and wonder of an experience, you must not be dominated by it to the extent that it governs your whole being and you lose balance and the contact with a reasonable and quiet attitude. That is to say when you enter, in whatever way, in relation with a force or consciousness which surpasses yours, instead of being entirely dominated by this consciousness or force, you must remember always that it is only one experience out of thousands and thousands of others and therefore it has not the character of the absolute, it is relative. However beautiful it may be you can and ought to have better ones. However exceptional it may be, there are others that are still more wonderful. However high it may be you can

rise higher still in the future. Then instead of losing your head, you place the experience in the chain of your self-development and you keep a sane physical balance, so that you do not lose the sense of relativity. Like that you do not risk anything.

The way? He who knows how to do that will always find it very easy, but for him who does not know, perhaps it is a little embarrassing.

There is one way.

Never to forget the sense of total self-giving to the Grace which is the expression of the Supreme. When you give yourself, you abandon, resign entirely to That which is above and beyond all creation. And instead of seeking a personal advantage out of the experience, you make an offering of it to the Divine Grace and you know that it is from the Grace that the experience comes and it is to that Grace that the result of the experience should be given back. Then you are safe.

In other words: no ambition, no vanity, no pride. Sincere self-giving, sincere humility and you are protected from all danger. There, that is what I call being greater than one's experience.

THE MOTHER

(*Bulletin*, August 1962, pp. 49-51)

———— DIFFERENCE BETWEEN

Sweet Mother, what is the difference between Yoga and religion?

Ah ! my child... it is as though you were asking me the difference between a dog and a cat !

(Long silence)

Imagine someone who, in some way or other, has heard about something like the Divine or has a personal feeling that something of the kind exists, and begins to make all sorts of efforts: effort of will, effort of discipline, effort of concentration, all sorts of efforts to find this Divine, to discover what He is, become acquainted with Him and unite with Him. Then this person is doing Yoga.

Now, if this person has noted all the processes employed and constructs a fixed system, and sets up all that he has discovered as absolute laws, — for example, he says: the Divine is like this, to find the Divine you must do this, make this particular gesture, take this attitude, perform this ceremony, and you must admit that this is the truth, you must say: “I accept that this is the Truth and I fully adhere to it; and your method is the only right one, the only one which exists” — if all that is written down, organised, arranged into fixed laws and ceremonies, that becomes a religion.

'Can one realise the Divine by this method (of religion) ?

YOGA AND RELIGION —————

Those who carry within themselves a spiritual destiny and are born to realise the Divine, to become conscious in Him and live Him, will get there, no matter what path, what way they follow. That is to say, even in religion there are people who have had spiritual experiences and found the Divine — not because of the religion, generally in spite of it, not withstanding it — because they had the inner urge and that urge led them there despite all obstacles and through them. Everything was good for them.

But if these very people want to express their experience, they naturally use the terms of the religion in which they were brought up, so they restrict their experience and perforce limit it greatly, they make it so to say sectarian. But they themselves may very well have surpassed all the forms and all the limitations and all the conventions and had the true experience in its pure simplicity.

Sweet Mother, in the world today most people follow some sort of religion. Are they helped?

Not much.

Perhaps they are beginning again now, but for a long time towards the beginning of this century, they had repudiated religion as something opposed to knowledge — at least all intellectual people had. And it is only recently that there has begun a movement of re-

turn to something other than a thorough-going positivism.

People follow a religion by social habit, in order not to be ill-spoken of by others. For instance, in a village, it is difficult not to go to religious ceremonies, for all your neighbours will point their finger at you. But that has absolutely nothing to do with spiritual life, nothing at all.

(Silence)

The first time I came to India I came on a Japanese boat. And on this Japanese boat there were two clergymen, that is, Protestant priests, of different sects. I don't remember what sects exactly, but they were both English; I think one was an Anglican and the other a Presbyterian.

Now, Sunday came. There had to be a religious ceremony on the boat, else they would have looked like pagans, even as the Japanese! There had to be a ceremony, but who should perform it? Should it be the Anglican or should it be the Presbyterian? They all but missed quarrelling. Finally, one of them withdrew with dignity (I don't remember which one now, I think it was the Anglican) and the Presbyterian performed his ceremony.

That took place in the saloon of the ship. We had to go down a few steps to this saloon. And that day, all the men put on their suits — it was hot, I think we were in the Red Sea — they put on their waist-coats, collars, leather shoes; neckties well set, hats on, and they went down, a book under their arm, almost in a

procession from the deck to the saloon. The ladies had their hats, some carried even a parasol, and they too had their book under the arm, a prayer-book.

And so, they all crowded down into the saloon, and the Presbyterian gave a sermon, that is to say, preached, and everybody listened very religiously. And then, when it was over, they all came up with the satisfied air of someone who has done his duty. And naturally, five minutes later they were at the bar drinking and playing cards, and their religious ceremony was forgotten. They had done their duty, it was over, there was nothing more to be said about it.

And the clergyman came to ask me, more or less politely, why I had not attended. I told him: "Sir, I am sorry, but I don't believe in religion."

"Oh ! oh ! you are a materialist !"

"No, not at all."

"Ah ! then why ?"

"Oh ! if I were to tell you, you would be quite displeased, it would be better not to say anything !"

But he insisted so much that I said at last: "Just this, that I don't feel you are sincere, neither you nor your flock. You all went there to fulfil a social duty and a social custom, not at all because you really wanted to enter into communion with God."

"Enter into communion with God ! But we can't do that ! All that we can do is to say some good words, but we have no ability to enter into communion with God."

Then I said: "But it was just because of that I didn't go, for that doesn't interest me."

After that he asked me many questions and confided to me that he was going to China to convert the "pagans". At last I became serious and told him: "Listen, even before your religion was born — it is not yet two thousand years ago — the Chinese had a very high philosophy and knew a path leading them to the Divine; and when they think of Westerners, they think of them as barbarians. And you are going there to convert those who know more about it than you? What are you going to teach them? To be insincere, to perform hollow ceremonies instead of following a profound philosophy and a detachment from life which lead them to a more spiritual consciousness?... I don't think you are going to do a very good thing."

Then he felt so suffocated, the poor man; he said to me: "Eh, I fear, I can't be convinced by your words!"

"Oh!" I said, "I am not trying to convince you, I only described the situation to you, and how I don't quite see why barbarians should wish to go and teach civilised people what they have known long before you. That's all."

And that was the end of it.

THE MOTHER

(*Questions and Answers*, 1956, pp. 130-133)

WHEN YOU FORGET THIS

In your relations with the Divine you are concerned not with the Divine's satisfaction of your personal desires, but with being pulled out of these things and raised to your highest spiritual possibilities, so that you may become united with the Mother within and as a result in the outer being also. That cannot be done by satisfying your vital desires — to do so would only increase them and give you into the hands of the ignorance and restless confusion of the ordinary Nature. It can be done only by your inner trust and surrender and by the pressure of the Mother's peace and Force working from within and changing your vital nature. It is when you forget this that you go wrong and suffer; when you remember it you progress and the difficulties become less and less insistent.

September 13, 1933

SRI AUROBINDO

(The Mother, Cent. Ed. Vol. 25, p. 191)

LIFE HAS A PURPOSE

Q : Is the aim of life to be happy ?

This is just putting things topsy-turvy.

The aim of human life is to discover the Divine and to manifest It. Naturally this discovery leads to happiness; but this happiness is a consequence, not an aim in itself. And it is this mistake of taking a mere consequence for aim of life that has been the cause of most of the miseries which are afflicting human life.

28. 3. 1970

THE MOTHER

(*Bulletin*, April 1970, p. 41)

TO MAKE LIFE SIGNIFICANT

All things are insignificant in ordinary life. The thoughts you think, the actions you do, the feelings you experience, all your movements have no significance at all, they possess no value. They belong to the superficial part of your being, they come and pass away, like ripples on the sea, leaving no trace or effect in the depths. Only at a rare moment, if ever you come in contact with a corner of your soul, if something of that inmost consciousness touches or gazes at any limb of yours, that flash of a moment is the only significant thing that happens in the midst of all the useless mass that is your life. This is the only precious point and the rest a world of rubbish. To make your life significant, to give it its true meaning and value, you must then draw back from the surface trivialities and look for something else behind. You must go very deep indeed if things are to cease being insignificant.

THE MOTHER

(Nolini Kanta Gupta, *The Yoga of Sri Aurobindo*, Part VII)

BIRTHDAY MESSAGES

to a Sadhak

A veil behind the heart, a lid over the mind divide us from the Divine. Love and devotion rend the veil, in the quietude of the mind the lid thins and vanishes.

September 9, 1936

May the inner Sun tranquillise and illumine the mind and awaken fully the heart and guide it.

September 9, 1937

In a quietude of the mind open to the presence of the Divine in your heart and everywhere; in a still mind and heart the Divine is seen like the sun in still water.

September 9, 1938

Rise into the higher consciousness, let its light control and transform the nature.

September 9, 1939

By the heart's self-giving the Presence and the Influence will be there even in the inconscience and prepare the nature for the true light and consciousness through the whole range of the being.

September 9, 1940

SRI AUROBINDO

(*On Himself*, Cent. Ed. Vol. 26, pp. 215-16)

TO ORIGINATE INTEREST in Students for Physical Education

Q: Sweet Mother, in the Section of Physical Education, you have made all the necessary arrangements so that by physical training we may be able to develop our body all round and thus become ready to participate in the Great Work of Integral Transformation.

We have been teaching games, sports and all sorts of physical activities for several years, but we find that the majority of our pupils cannot catch the fundamental spirit. They are generally led astray by amusement, excitement, impulsive mood and all kinds of likes and dislikes. In consequence, the discipline, the will, the resolution, the hard work and the true attitude which render progress certain are lacking on the whole. A football match or an exciting game arouses a lot of enthusiasm but a conscientious and concentrated work which will help us to command certain physical qualities and set right certain defects is always done with very little eagerness. The great bulk of pupils, big and small, suffer from this malady. There are very few who approach Physical Education with the right attitude. How shall we learn to make a general practice of it?

A: It is the contents of the consciousness that ought to change, the level of the consciousness that ought to rise, the quality of the consciousness that ought to progress.

Things are as you have described them, because

most children have their consciousness centred in the physical which is tamasic and little inclined towards effort. They want an easy life, and it is only the excitement or the rivalry of a game or of a competition that awakens in them enough interest for consenting to make an effort. It is necessary for this that a vital passion should awaken and intensify the will.

The idea of progress belongs to the intelligent will which is active only in those — very few — who are in contact with their psychic being; later on, in those who are mentally more developed and begin to understand the need of developing and surpassing themselves.

I have said that the remedy is to raise the consciousness to a higher level. But, naturally, one should start with the consciousness-level of the captains and instructors themselves.

First of all, they should have a clear conception of what they want to get out of those for whom they are responsible; and not only that, but they should have realised in themselves the qualities which they demand from others. Over and above these qualities, they should have developed in their character and their action a lot of patience, endurance, benevolence, understanding and impartiality. They should have no preferences or antipathies, no attractions or revulsions.

That is why the new group of captains ought really to be a group of the *élite* in order to set a good example to the pupils and students, if we want that they in their turn should adopt the true attitude.

To all therefore I say: start to work sincerely and the obstacles will be, sooner or later, overcome.

Q: Sweet Mother, there are certain activities in our programme of Physical Education which are of a more serious nature than the others and call for more concentration: these tend to become boring for the children. Ought the captains to organise their groups in such a way that all they teach may be interesting and amusing, or is it that the children should try to create the interest in themselves?

A: Both are indispensable and ought, as much as possible, to be always present.

With a little imagination and inventive suppleness, the instructors ought to give charm and novelty to what they teach.

On their part, the children, by cultivating in themselves the will for progress and the taste for progress, should create a constant interest in what they do.

In the meanwhile, the captains can partly entrust to the children the care of organising their own exercises, by using as much as possible whatever ingenious ideas may occur to them.

If the sense of collaboration and of responsibility is awakened in the children, they will at the same time get interested in what they do, and will do it with pleasure.

THE MOTHER

(Mother India, August & Sept., 1961)

A PRAYER

The world is divided into two contrary forces which struggle for supremacy, and both are equally opposed to Thy law, O Lord; for Thou wilt neither mortal stagnation nor blind destruction. It is in a constant, progressive and luminous transformation that Thou expressest Thyself; and it is this we have to establish on the earth if we would manifest Thy will.

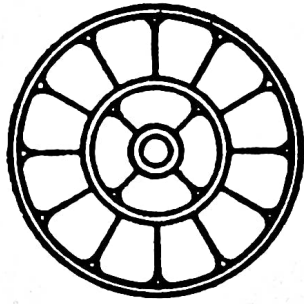
Sometimes our impatience wants to know immediately the means of this manifestation. But our impatience is vain and receives no response. For the knowledge will come at the opportune moment, at the moment of action.

So it is with the thought at rest and the realising will, calm and strong, that we await the sign Thou will give us.

September 9, 1914

THE MOTHER

(Prières et Méditations)



This world is full of
pitiable miseries - But of
all beings Those are the most
to be pitied who are so
small and so weak that
they cannot avoid being
nasty.

18-9-63



ATTACHMENT FOR THE DIVINE

Wraps itself around the Divine and finds all its support in Him so as to be sure never to leave Him.

(Significance and explanation are given by the Mother)

Botanical names : (Above) Orchidaceae

(Left side) *Belamcanda chinensis*

THE DAY THE EARTH TURNED GOLD

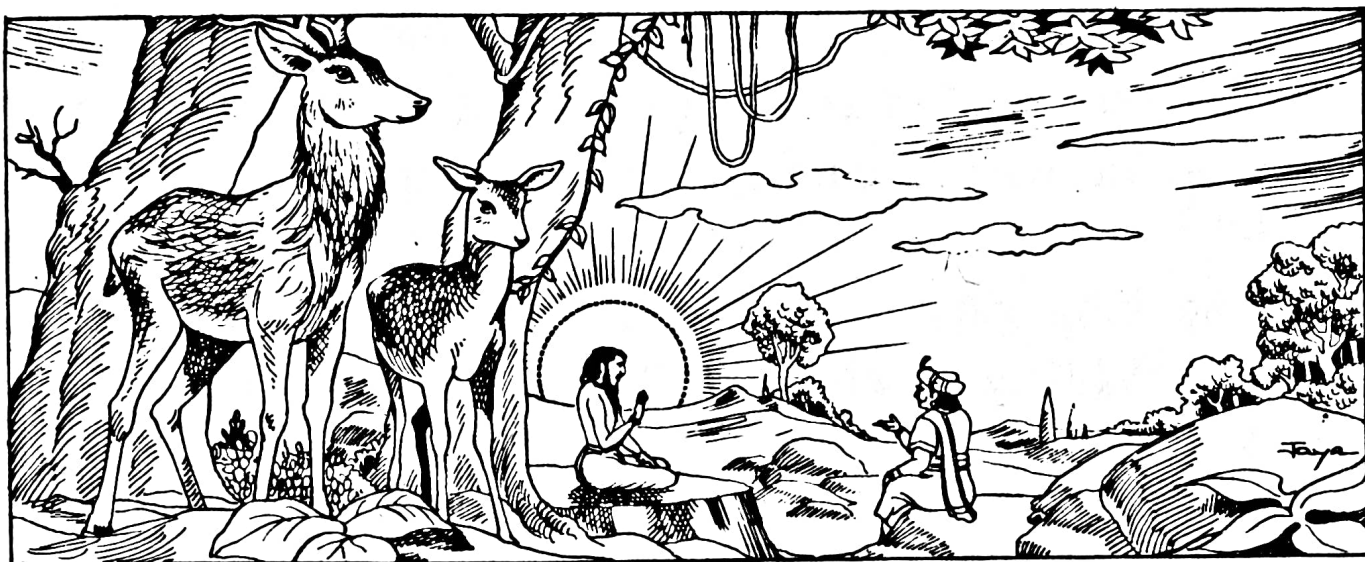
Once upon a time there was a king who was famous for his charity. People said, "To hungry he gives food; to scholars he gives rewards; to noblemen he gives titles and honours. In fact he is never tired of giving."

But he had in fact already grown tired of giving. He thought, "All my life I have been giving alms and awards. Where is the end? Are the people really needy or they continue to come simply because I give? Don't I see the same faces coming to me again and again wearing a standard mask of gratitude?"

He thought a lot and decided to stop the practice. "If give I must, it should be only to those who are really needy. It is high time I know who are really needy and, to begin with, I must find out the poorest man in my kingdom," he decided.

Accordingly he sent his ministers to find out the poorest man.

A week later the minister returned and announced in the tone of a successful explorer, "My lord, not far from here, inside the forest, there is a small mountain. On top of that sits the poorest man of our land — a mendicant. He has no roof on his head, nothing on his body except a yard of bark; he lives on whatever fruits some wood-cutters care to leave beside him on their way home from the forest."



“Is there really such a man in my kingdom? I must see him,” said the king and rode into the forest and then climbed the mountain and found out the mendicant sitting still, his eyes closed.

The king had to wait for a long time. When the mendicant opened his eyes, he said, “I am the king of this land. I am sad to see the miserable condition in which you are living. I want you to dress well; tell me, what kind of dress will you like? Dhoti or chapkan?” The mendicant smiled, but kept quiet.

The king said again, “I will like to build a house for you; tell me, what kind of house will you like to own?” The mendicant smiled again; yet he did not speak.

A little later the king again said, “I will arrange to send some food for you everyday. Tell me your preference in matters of food.” The mendicant smiled but still kept mum.

The king began losing patience and cried out, “I appeal to you, do speak!”

Slowly but sweetly the mendicant said, “My dear king, you are mistaken. I am not the poorest man.

There is another man in the kingdom who is poorer than myself. So far as I am concerned, althought I look poor, I am very rich, for I can change the earth into gold."

The king gaped with amazement for some time and asked, "Will you kindly tell me who is poorer than you? And will you kindly reveal to me the secret of transforming the earth into gold?"

The mendicant said, "To know these things you have to follow a certain discipline."

"I will follow," said the king enthusiastically.

"For full one year, everyday, you must come here once before the sunrise and once again before the sunset and spend some time with me," said the mendicant.

"I will do so," said the joyous king, bowing to the mendicant.

And he came there twice everyday without fail. The mendicant seldom uttered any word, but his charming smile always spoke of his affection for the king. He made the king sit down and meditate for some time. For the king the discipline was a bit awkward experience for the first few weeks. But soon he realised that it was a most welcome change from the dry or anxious hours of the court where he was always surrounded by diplomats and flatterers and discontented people. After a few months he grew so fond of his visits to the mendicant that he eagerly looked forward to the twilights.

The silence of the mountain, the sunrise and sunset which coloured the landscape, the breeze which embraced him with the message of freedom, the songs of the birds in the wood and above all the quiet yet over-

whelming presence of the mendicant slowly made the king a different man. The little time he spent there everyday had its sure effect on the rest of his time and routine.

The king did not remember when a year passed. He even did not know when several years passed. At the end of the third year one day the mendicant suddenly asked the king, "Well, it seems we have forgotten about the two things you wanted to know — about the man poorer than myself and about the secret of transforming the earth into gold. Would you not like to know about them?"

The king smiled and replied, "But haven't I known them already? I was the poorer man because I was anxious to possess more gold and I was begging to know the secret of changing the earth into gold. And secondly, I believe, by now I have known the secret of changing the earth into gold. When I sit here and marvel at the splendour of nature all around at sunsets and sunrises when the colours of heaven are sprinkled on earth — at the diamond-fringed clouds — at all God's creation — all appear to me a thousand times more wonderful than gold."

The mendicant smiled and said, "You have got it — and that is because you have turned gold within."

Retold by MANOJ DAS

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